

Remarks by U.S. Ambassador Beatrice W. Welters

New Technologies for

21st Century Border Enforcement

9 a.m. November 1, 2012

Regency Ballroom, Hyatt Regency, Port of Spain

Salutations

- ❖ His Excellency Arthur Snell- High Commissioner of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- ❖ Rear Admiral Richard Kelshall –Ministry of National Security
- ❖ Permanent Secretaries & Senior Government Officials
- ❖ Staff of the U.S. Embassy and Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- ❖ Other Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen
- ❖ Members of the Media

As many of you know, **today** is my **last full day** as the U.S. Ambassador to this **beautiful** country.

I am happy to see **so many** of my **friends** here for this event.

Tomorrow I will be returning to the United States as a **private citizen**.

But being named as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, by my President, President **Barack Obama**, has been a **fantastic honor**.

Living here, I discovered the **natural gift** of the **warmth and friendship** that the people of Trinidad and Tobago possess, and I have **formed many many friendships** that will last for a **lifetime**.

Looking back on my **two-and-a-half years**, I have had a fascinating experience, interacting with the **leaders of this nation**, the **people** and especially the **youth**.

I look forward to returning to **my foundations** and my work with **cultural and arts organizations**.

And of course I will **continue** to work with **charities and organizations** here in Trinidad and Tobago as the **former Ambassador** and as a **private citizen**.

I'm **very glad** that I have a chance to speak to all of you on **my last day**, a day when I'm certainly thinking a lot about **the future**.

Today we will discuss the **important question** of how **new technology** will affect Trinidad and Tobago's **security** over the next few years.

We see **new security technology appearing** every day.

Banks are **replacing** PIN numbers with finger prints, software can **identify the friends** in your photos, and in many countries you can **avoid a long line** at immigration by entering a booth which checks your passport and takes your picture.

All of these things can make life **more convenient**, but the technology has to be used **with care** and the information **collected** has **to be protected**.

In this **integrated world** where **more** goods and people are moving **faster** than ever before, countries need to know **who** is crossing their borders and **what** goods are entering and exiting their ports.

The **documents** we have relied on for years can be **tampered** with or **forged**. **Imposters** and **look-alikes** can use legitimate, but stolen, documents to pass through border security.

New methods are **needed**.

But there is **no** magic bullet.

Technology is an important **tool**, but it must be applied with **care** and **foresight**.

In order to better **understand** this brave **new** world, the Embassy's Customs attaché, **Roxanne Hercules**, has invited two **world-renowned** experts in the field of security – Reuben Krishnamurthy and Clive Blackwell – to lead a **discussion** today.

We are also working with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to take an important first step by providing **millions of dollars** of **x-ray scanning equipment** for sea and air ports.

These scanners will allow for **more efficient** inspections and thus to **faster** movement of people and **quicker** processing of goods.

These are **exciting times** for all of us.

Technology once seen only in **James Bond** movies and **Star Trek** is becoming **commonplace**.

I trust that **today** we will all learn a great deal how we can best use it to make us all **safer and more secure**.

Thank you.